

CD 2009--45



UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
FACULTY OF MUSIC

University of Toronto Wind Ensemble
Gillian MacKay, conductor

Saturday, March 21, 2009
7:30 pm. MacMillan Theatre

An abstract, dark, high-contrast graphic of a musical instrument, possibly a tuba or euphonium, rendered in a splattered, ink-like style. The instrument is positioned in the lower half of the page, with several large, dark ink splatters radiating upwards and outwards from its top. The background is white, and the overall effect is dynamic and artistic.

08|09 SEASON

WHERE GREAT MINDS MEET GREAT MUSIC

Program

Noisy Wheels of Joy

Eric Whitacre
(b. 1970)

Leah McGray Manning, graduate student conductor

Spiel

Ernst Toch
(1887-1964)

Daniel Rutzen, graduate student conductor

Concerto for Marimba and Wind Ensemble

Ney Rosauro
(b. 1952)

I Saudação (Greetings)

II Lamento (Lament)

III Dança (Dance)

IV Despedida (Farewell)

arr. Tony McCutchen

Michelle Colton, marimba
Gillian MacKay, conductor

- INTERMISSION -

and the mountains rising nowhere

Joseph Schwantner
(b. 1943)

French Impressions

Guy Woolfenden
(b. 1937)

Rita Arendz, graduate student conductor

Sasparilla

John Mackey
(b. 1973)

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO WIND ENSEMBLE
Gillian MacKay, conductor

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Program Notes

Noisy Wheels of Joy

ERIC WHITACRE

Eric Whitacre, (b.1970) is an accomplished American composer of choral and wind music. He graduated from the Juilliard School, studying with Pulitzer Prize- and Oscar-winning composer John Corigliano. Whitacre has created many distinctive and evocative pieces for the wind ensemble, such as *Equus*, *Ghost Train Triptych*, and *October*. Choral works *Lux Arumque*, *Cloudburst*, and *Sleep*, have also found favour as arrangements for instrumental groups such as wind and brass ensembles. *Sleep* has been most recently heard as a marimba quartet, arranged and performed by Toronto's own percussion group TorQ. Mr. Whitacre lives in Los Angeles with his wife, Grammy-winning vocalist Hila Plitmann, and their son.

Noisy Wheels of Joy is written in the tradition of comic operatic overtures. Three themes representing love, adventure and buffo (comedy), heard in the opening moments, provide the melodic structure as the ensemble passes through on a wild journey. Musical representation of wheels and vehicles spinning past add to the image of a chase scene from a movie. *Noisy Wheels* was commissioned by The Band Composers Masterworks Consortium, and premiered in 2002 at the American Bandmasters Association National Convention.

Note by Leah McGray Manning

Spiel für Wind Orchestra, op. 39

ERNST TOCH

German composer Ernst Toch described himself as "the most forgotten composer of the twentieth century." Not for lack of trying, Toch is credited with a canon of music that takes inspiration from Mozart, Bach and Brahms leading up to World War I. After his participation in the war and subsequent relocation to the United States, Toch's compositional output was grounded in more progressive styles of writing that resembled the melodic and harmonic language used by his friend and colleague, Paul Hindemith. He was an Academy Award nominee and a Grammy award winner for his film and orchestral scores.

Spiel für Blasorchester, which is regarded as an important German work of the 1920's, was premiered in Germany in 1926 by Hermann Scherchen, to whom the piece is dedicated. Three movements bring to life Toch's 'game' using musical forces typical of German military bands of the time (including flugelhorn and minus saxophones). The Miniature Overture is marked by a lively opening in mixed meter where Toch's harmonic language and emphasis on melody is clearly heard. It is followed by a lyrical trio section where the flowing legato melody is accentuated with Hindemith-influenced counterpoint. Idyll, also in Ternary form, is described by Toch's German contemporaries as evoking a "bittersweet nostalgia" for the Germany of the 1920's. The oboe takes centre stage atop a light ostinato in the horns, bassoon and clarinets. Buffo can be described as the love child of Paul Hindemith and John Phillip Sousa. It is a circus march in its form and content; however, Toch's harmonic language firmly grounds this movement in the avant-garde. The exquisite counterpoint allows the movement's main theme to be radically coloured by texture and rhythm. In addition, the melodic themes in the 'B' section of the movement are comically punctuated by the upper winds and percussion.

Concerto for Marimba

NEY ROSAURO

This concerto for marimba and orchestra was originally written in the summer of 1986. It has had a tremendous life, made popular in large part by Dame Evelyn Glennie, who recorded the work in 1990 with the London Symphony Orchestra. It was arranged for winds by Tony McCutchen, percussion coordinator at the University of Georgia in Athens. As an interesting personal note, McCutchen was an undergraduate teacher of Brian Graiser, who is now a graduate student here at U of T, and is playing in our percussion section this evening. The composer, Rosauro, is also a percussionist himself, and is internationally known as a performer, composer, and teacher. The arrangement of this work has given a new life to this piece, which is often studied by advanced university students. There are four movements to this concerto, rather than the usual three. It contains Brazilian-influenced rhythms and melodies which are both

challenging for the performer and appealing to the audience. Michelle Colton, tonight's soloist, won the opportunity to perform this work in the Concerto Competition last fall.

and the mountains rising nowhere

JOSEPH SCHWANTNER

This is the first of several pieces Joseph Schwantner has written for winds, and it stands as one of the most significant wind pieces of the second half of the 20th century. This is a work which was vastly different in style and scope than other works written at the same time. Composed in 1977, this piece calls for extraordinary coordination of woodwind, brass, and percussion sections, in parts that are technically and musically extraordinarily challenging. Significant in Schwantner's compositional style is the use of percussion instruments. Huge numbers of pitched and non-pitched instruments are used in six large groupings, one group for each player, for a total of over thirty different types of instrument. Schwantner's percussion sounds seem suspended in mid-air; they sparkle and shimmer and punctuate every gesture in the piece. Among the unusual sounds, Schwantner calls for two water gongs, which will be seen and heard on either side of the group. Gongs are stuck as they are lowered and raised from large containers of water – the effect is unique and breathtaking. Amplified piano serves as the anchor of the whole piece. As the central voice, the piano serves as the foundation for each section – it introduces the primary motives and creates cohesion between the woodwinds and brass. Many other unusual sounds come out of the texture, including singing, whistling, and the sounds of tuned wine glasses, played by the oboe section.

French Impressions

GUY WOOLFENDEN

French Impressions was written in 1998 for symphonic wind orchestra. Woolfenden's artistry in texture, colour, rhythm and melody, combined with his astute sense of physical movement, all culminate in this work. His inspiration for this 2-movement work comes from the paintings of Georges Seurat (1859-1891). *Parade*, the first-movement, depicts the image of two of Seurat's paintings. *La Parade de Cirque: Invitation to the Sideshow* shows a group of musicians on the side of a gas-lit street, and it is juxtaposed against

the masterpiece *A Bathing Place, Asnières* – a sunny green bank of the river Seine where bathers are staring across to the far side. Woolfenden's predominant use of the woodwinds is reminiscent of the Conservatoire de Paris and Cecile Chaminade's *Concertino for Flute & Orchestra*, Op. 107. The second movement, *Can-Can* (Fr. "tittle-tattle" or "scandal") combines the imagery of two more of Seurat's works: *Le Cirque* (Fr. "circus") with its one-ring circus complete with Ring Master, tumblers, jokers, and lady standing on a horse's back; and *Le Chahut* (Fr. "noise" or "uproar"), the chorus-line version of the cancan with a pit orchestra. This movement is in total contrast to the first, with all the energy and emotion that comes with circus and dance-hall performances alike. The writing techniques include passages that are very representative of circus music, and of the cancan complete with the pit orchestra "vamping till-ready" as they wait for those on stage to take their places. Here the "Galop Infernal" from Jacques Offenbach's *Orpheus in the Underworld* truly meets Moulin Rouge.

Note by Rita Arendz

Sasparilla

JOHN MACKEY

John Mackey is a young American composer who is developing a reputation for writing fun-filled compositions that challenge players and thrill audiences. His career has been closely tied to the world of professional dance - he has a long list of commissions by significant dance companies, including the New York City Ballet and the Alvin Ailey Dance Company. Last season, the Wind Ensemble performed his *Red Line Tango. Sasparilla* is a light-hearted work which we are happy to present as the last piece of our concert season. Named for the old-time alcoholic beverage which was served in the legendary American West, the piece has several attractive tunes which undergo stylistic transformation. In his own program notes, Mackey lists saloons, ponies, Tijuana, and drunken cowboy as possible images in the piece. It also features the accordion, and we are happy to have U of T alum Nemanja Pjanic with us this evening to play this solo role. As with all of Mackey's pieces, this work has an innovative and delightful relationship with rhythm, and also contains many features which might be heard in an old cartoon.

Note by Gillian MacKay

Biographies

Gillian MacKay is an Associate Professor of Music at the University of Toronto, where she conducts wind ensembles, and teaches conducting, trumpet, and music education. An award-winning teacher, Dr. MacKay has an active career as an adjudicator, conductor, and clinician throughout Canada and the United States. As a trumpeter, she is busy as a recitalist, orchestral player, and chamber musician. Gillian holds degrees and diplomas from the University of Lethbridge, McGill University, the University of Calgary, and Northwestern University. She has held previous faculty positions at the University of Windsor and Medicine Hat College.

Leah McGray Manning completed her Bachelor of Music and Bachelor of Education degrees at Acadia University in Wolfville, Nova Scotia. Since her graduation in 2001, Leah has taught in band, choral, and string programs in Ottawa, Ontario, Rothesay, New Brunswick, and Halifax, Nova Scotia. She has served on the board for the Nova Scotia Youth Wind Ensemble, and the New Brunswick and Nova Scotia Band Associations, and continued to perform with the New Brunswick Winds, the Atlantic Wind Orchestra, and a number of community band and string groups. Leah has conducted in workshops with many notable conductors, including Frank Battisti, Dr. Paula Holcomb, Dr. Mark Hopkins, Dr. Dale Lonis, and Dr. Glenn Price. Pursuing the study of conducting has brought Leah to University of Toronto, where she is currently in her first year of a Master of Music degree with Dr. Gillian MacKay.

Daniel Rutzen originally hails from Atlanta, GA where he excelled as a competitive pianist and bassoonist. Upon graduating from the University of Illinois with a Bachelor's of Music Education, Dan took a choral job at Alief Taylor High School in Houston, Texas in 2001. While in Houston, Dan served as resident musical director for Masquerade Theatre and Bayou City Concert Musicals, where he performed at Houston's Hobby Center for the Performing Arts.

Dan relocated to Canada in 2005 and began work on a Master in Conducting with Dr. Doreen Rao at the University of Toronto Faculty of Music. In the 2 years that followed, Dan was a master class conductor

under Maestro Helmuth Rilling for the '05 and '06 Toronto Bach Festival. Dan is also a very active conductor/musical director in and around Toronto performing at Church of the Redeemer, MCCCT, St. Michael's College and Hart House. In 2008, Dan was selected to be the assistant conductor of the North York Concert Orchestra under David Bowser. He is now completing his second year as a DMA student in Wind Conducting with Dr. Gillian MacKay.

Rita Arendz received her Bachelor of Music in Performance from the University of Toronto in 1982 where she studied French Horn with Frederick Rizner, Marcus Hennigar, and Eugene Rittich. Her introduction into conducting began through her involvement with the Canadian Forces Primary Reserves where she was asked to be the Director of Music of The Queen's Own Rifles of Canada. In 1997 she accepted The Queen's Commission and currently holds the rank of Captain. As Director of Music, Rita has conducted not only in Ontario and Quebec, but also New York, and throughout England, France, and Holland.

Rita has also attended several conducting symposia where she conducted for Jack Stamp, Frank Battisti, Gerry King, Craig Kirchhoff, and Richard Blatti. She is currently completing her conducting studies with Dr. Gillian MacKay at the University of Toronto.

Michelle Colton will graduate in 2009 with her Master's of Music degree in Percussion Performance at the University of Toronto, where she is a teaching assistant for percussion and steel pan. Michelle earned her Bachelor of Music Education/Performance degree from University of Iowa in 2006. She performed with the University of Iowa Percussion Ensemble in Beijing, China in 2006, and also in the Keiko Abe Toho Gakuen Marimba masterclass in Tokyo, Japan in 2008. Michelle has studied music from Japan, India, Indonesia, Ghana, China, Cuba, Brazil, and Trinidad, and plans to continue her studies in world music. In 2007 she performed for Dame Evelyn Glennie's masterclass, and also with Glennie in 2007 and 2009. She performed Steve Reich's *Drumming* with NEXUS in 2008. Michelle's goals are to continue to study, perform, and teach percussion.

UPCOMING U OF T WIND SYMPHONY CONCERT

Jeffrey Reynolds, conductor

Bernstein: Overture to *Candide*, Robert Russell Bennett: *Symphonic Songs for Band*
Fergal Carroll: *The Song of Lir*, and works by Jack Stamp and Adam Gorb

Friday, March 27, 2009

7:30 pm. MacMillan Theatre. \$14 (\$8 seniors/students)

U of T Wind Ensemble

FLUTE

Sanghee Park (piccolo)
Alexa Ball (piccolo)
Katherine Watson (piccolo)
Jy Hyun Goo (piccolo)
Mackenzie Polak

OBOE

Yee-Ting Ng
Candice Barnes (cor anglais)

CLARINET

Jong Min Lee
Sydney Chang
Charlene Lee
Ana Michelle Cruz (bass)
Kathleen Arnup
Stephanie Geary (Eb)
Jason Chum
Joshua Phillips (bass)
Leah McGray Manning
(contrabass)

BASSOON

Dan Rutzen
Shirley Chen (contrabassoon)
Maggie Stephenson (contra-
bassoon)

SAXOPHONE

Chelsea Shanoff
Shaun Mallinen
Richard Van
Olivia Shortt
David Pitman
Robin Reid-Moran
Amy Duong

HORN

Carlie Bigelow
Lauren Scobie
Amy Kazandjian
Samantha Aukstakalnis
Nancy Mann
Rita Arendz

TRUMPET

Andrea Vaughan
Alastair Chaplin
Jenna Howells
Michelle Wylie
Ben Promane

TROMBONE

Annemieke Vanderkraay
Lydia Vamvouras (bass)
Joyce McGill
Brendan Rawlins

EUPHONIUM

Brendan Rawlins
Devin Sloos
Leonidas Varahidis

TUBA

Eric Probst
Haley Larman

PERCUSSION

Justin Han
Michelle Hwu
Stefan Kitai
Andy Luck
Étienne Levesque
Brian Graiser

PIANO

Wesley Shen

HARP

Veronique Drozd

BASS

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